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PACIFIC WEEKLY

A WESTERN JOURNAL OF FACTS AND OPINION

JANUARY 18, 1935

**WE'LL HANG TOGETHER
OR ---**

BY GEORGE HEDLEY

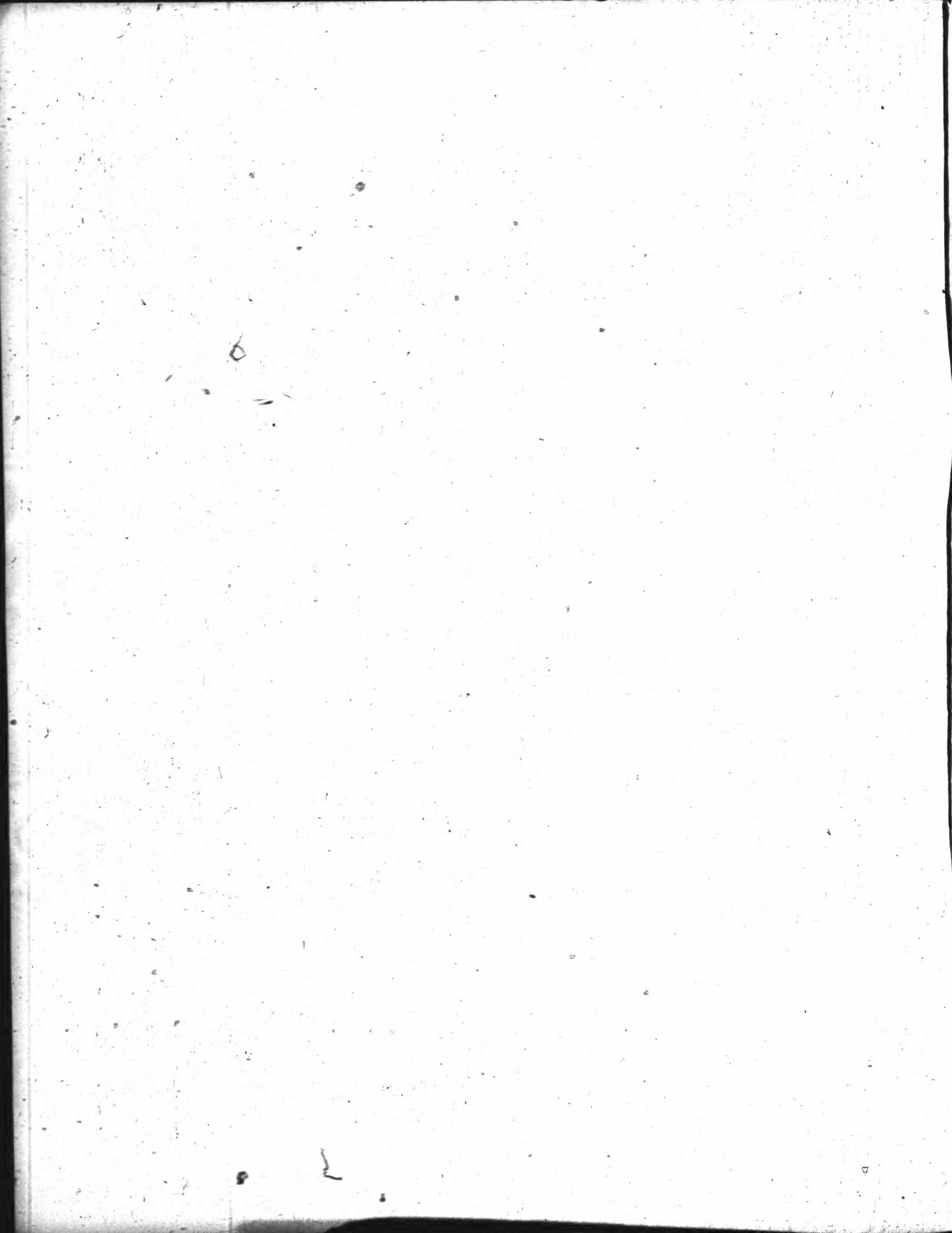
**WHAT A COLLEGE SENIOR
THINKS ABOUT**

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PACIFIC WEEKLY

VOLUME II

Friday, January 18, 1935

NUMBER 3

A FRANK AND HONEST WORD

PACIFIC WEEKLY is not a Communist magazine; it is not a Socialist magazine, or a Workers' or a Labor Union magazine.

PACIFIC WEEKLY IS a radical magazine in every sense that the dictionary defines the word "radical".

Here is my Desk Standard definition:

"Proceeding from the root or foundation; essential; fundamental; thoroughgoing; unsparing; extreme."

There's something to tie to, and PACIFIC WEEKLY ties to it with avidity, even to the "extreme". What times have there been that call for more extreme thought, more extreme words, more extreme measures than the times we find ourselves in today?

If PACIFIC WEEKLY has a Communist or a Socialist tinge, or taint, it is because people of these faiths have something fundamental, essential, thoroughgoing, unsparing, extreme to say and also the ability and the courage to say it. These are times that try men's souls, and a solution for the ills that are upon us must come from somewhere. How better can we find it than by listening to those who believe that they have it; those who by study and training and experience are fitted to voice their expression of opinion and compel attention to their views?

It is elemental to hark back to the idea that the best way to relieve the pressure on a boiler is to open the safety valve. But the best way to relieve the pressure of present day thought, which eventually will lead to action, is to permit those who are thinking to voice their thoughts. PACIFIC WEEKLY is dedicated to this policy. It purposed to make itself a safety valve, a forum, for those who are honestly and sincerely endeavoring to find a way out for us in the present social and economic turmoil.

PACIFIC WEEKLY commends itself to those who are not afraid of the truth; who are not frightened by bugaboos; who do not let their sensibilities suffer shock from plain, unvarnished and honest statements of fact. PACIFIC WEEKLY commends itself to those who are brave and courageous enough to admit convictions which are not their convictions, faiths which are not their faiths, traditions which are not their traditions, beliefs which are not their beliefs—ah, yes, travail which is not their travail, poverty which is not their poverty, injustice which they are not suffering and tragedy which it has not been in their lives to bear.

There ARE these things. You can't shut your eyes and ears to them and clear your conscience of bigotry and intolerance. You cannot close your mind to the thoughts and beliefs and convictions of others. You who are radiantly certain of yourself may not deny the radiance of certainty in others. The time has passed when we accept without thought and conjecture the social system as it has existed for many generations behind us. We know that there is fault in it; that it has failed us. It has failed us even though you, yourself, are today no worse off materially than you were ten years ago, or even better off than you were then. You may have an equal income; you may be enjoying just as many comforts; you may be spending your leisure hours in just as joyful pursuits; but whether you realize it or not, you are skating on damned thin ice; ice that has been melted thin by the red hot anger and bitterness of those who are not so fortunate as you; those who have been struck down by the falling bricks of the collapsing social structure.

And you can't stand aside and yell "red" and "pink" and

"parlor bolshevik" at men and women who no longer are limited to the unwashed and the illiterate. Many of you whose only claim to a standing in the community is that you dress well, pay your bills, own real estate, believe in patriotism, live up to your marriage vows, at least know where the town library is, and can trace your ancestry back to the Mayflower, are muttering "red" and thinking "red" at a surprisingly different mass of human beings than were the butt of your smug contempt ten and fifteen years ago. You're not muttering and sneering DOWN any more; you're muttering and sneering UP. You're tilting your heads back and straining your necks at Professors William P. Montague and John Dewey of Columbia University, at Chancellor Woodburn Chase and Professor Sidney Hook of New York University, at Dr. William E. Hocking of Harvard, at Professor C. M. Bakewell of Yale, at Dr. Daniel T. MacDougal of Carmel and Tucson, at Lincoln Steffens, at Ella Winter, at Adriana Spadoni and scores of others in this country, all of whose intellects are far superior to those of many of you patriots; all of whom are thinking men and women with backgrounds of high education and experience; all of whom see the trend of events about which most of you have little conception.

How silly some of you appear yelling "red" and "pink" and "radical" at such as they!

They realize the thin ice and they are trying to do something about it. Their methods may differ, and do, but they all have a common end in view. They are trying to arrest the thaw by thought and, if need be, action which will crystallize that thought. They are not content with sitting back and letting a situation take care of itself when they know that it will not take care of itself. They know, whether or not they have religious beliefs, that God will not do anything for us materially even though we have been placating him for nearly three hundred years on the very material surface of our money. They know that there is nothing to conjure with in the mere name of the United States; that this nation has no mystic powers and that no miracles are going to happen. The spirit and the courage of the Puritans will not help us now; the brilliance and statesmanship of Washington and Jefferson and Hamilton are no aid today; the magic wisdom of Abraham Lincoln cannot serve us.

I have been told that I am right, but that I am up against a stone wall. I want to suggest to those who think this that that stone wall isn't the impregnable structure it was ten or fifteen years ago; ask the Fleishackers in San Francisco, or Mr. Giani—*they'll tell you*. And let me tell you that if they want to bolster it up again, or give it any semblance of steadfastness once more, they had better give ear to these Communists, these Socialists, these workers, this rank and file, and the intelligent men and women who find themselves on their side for the public good; to save the United States of America for democracy, for decency, for justice and for right.

It is to this principle, to this end that PACIFIC WEEKLY is dedicated—fundamental, thoroughgoing, unsparing, essential, extreme—that's radicalism.

PACIFIC WEEKLY is a radical magazine.

—W. K. BASSETT

January 18, 1935

NOTES AND COMMENT

IT APPEARS that the morals of the American people are to be protected from the menace contained in "Ecstasy", a foreign-made film play. It further appears that the President of the United States has moved for this protection of our morals. In addition it appears that a telegram from Alfred E. Smith to the President had something to do with the President's action in the matter.

All appearances are particularly disgusting. In the first place, there is quite too much time and effort expended in the safeguarding of the people's morals. The same amount of time and energy could very well be directed in channels that would have to do with the feeding and clothing of people who need food and clothing. The matter of morals, not particularly pressing at the moment, could be left to a later date when, say, the people are a bit more comfortable materially. It could be safely left to the people themselves without harm coming to the nation.

In the second place, protection of the morals of the people is not a prerogative of the President, or should it be a matter for his precious consideration. President Roosevelt could very well declare with Stevenson: "It is not my duty to make my neighbor good, but happy", and he would find, also with Stevenson, that that job would take all the time he has.

The adult people of the United States resent, and they have a right to resent, this business of telling them what plays they may see or may not see; what books they may read, or may not read. Certainly they have a double right to resent the Pope, whose ban was quoted by Mr. Smith in his telegram to the President, telling them what books and plays are proper for them. The Pope and Mr. Smith are members of a powerful religious organization whose edicts have, or should have, complete obedience from her communicants. No one outside the Roman Catholic Church can quarrel with that, and no non-Catholic cares a tinker's dam what the Pope or Mr. Smith tell the Catholics they can see, hear or read. But non-Catholics have a right to object quite strenuously to the Pope and Mr. Smith telling them what they may see, or hear or read. The Catholic church publishes an index which tells its communicants what books are not permitted them to read. The Catholic church may publish an index telling its communicants what films they may or may not see. But by what possible attempt at logic has it the right to extend its proscription over intelligent and self-sufficient people who do not happen to belong to the Catholic church?

If non-Catholics accepted the Catholic church as a theological instrument of widespread good, again the matter would be dif-

ferent. But non-Catholics in the main precisely do not accept it as such. There are many quite intelligent persons, thousands upon thousands of them who hotly oppose its spiritual dominance in America.

It has a power, however, apart from and beside its theological sway, and this concerns Mr. Roosevelt and Mr. Roosevelt's ambitions regarding November, 1936. A telegram to him, quoting the head of the Methodist church, or the Presbyterian church, or, even, the Episcopal church, would not be attended with the same degree of alacrity which the telegram of Mr. Smith received. The prelates of the Methodist, Presbyterian and Episcopal churches could make demands of their respective flocks until the cows came home and the response in the main would be: "This is not a spiritual matter; I'll do as my perfectly capable intelligence and good judgment dictate", from the individual members of the flocks. A Roman Catholic priest's dictum, on the other hand, would have a different result on the part of the faithful, and President Roosevelt's intelligence should not be insulted to the extent of suggesting that he doesn't know this.

"The Pope has banned this picture in Europe," telegraphs Mr. Smith, and the President proceeds toward safeguarding our morals. It is said that the picture's main objectionable features are a "flash of the leading actress in the nude and a close-up of her facial reactions to a burning embrace". Well, if the Pope and Mr. Smith and Catholics generally couldn't see those feet of film without having their morals corrupted, they could jolly well show their strength of character and stay away from the movie. The rest of us could display ours by seeing it and remaining just as decent citizens and quite as moral after having done so, or, if you will, not letting it have any effect one way or the other on our particular immorality of that week.

* *

CIVILIZATION is turning more and more to the social engineer to manage the world's affairs. Can we even with social engineers save the world from war, chaos, destruction? Must we have war? If so, why will it be fought, and what can be hoped from it? Who will be the adversaries?

These are questions that are turning themselves over and over in the minds of thinking people in the world today. Light on them is sought from those who by their particular temperament, and their indefatigable study, can see the trend of the nations; can delineate the attitudes of the nations and see the inevitable results. Scott Nearing is one such. He is a world traveler, a sociologist, a student, a keen observer of current affairs and a deft analyzer of political currents. He is a man with the reputation of knowing what he is talking about.

Carmel is to have the opportunity of hear-

ing Mr. Nearing this Saturday evening under the auspices of the Carmel Film and Forum. The famous author and lecturer will open the 1935 season of Film and Forum with a lecture on "The Struggle for the Pacific". There are many wise men who believe that the next bloody struggle the world has, if it is destined to have another bloody struggle, will be on, around and for the Pacific Ocean. It will be vastly interesting to hear what Scott Nearing thinks about it; particularly so because for many years he has devoted much of his attention to the conditions which tend to throw light on the future of this great part of the world.

* *

SUPPORT of the strike of the newspaper reporters on the Newark, N.J., *Ledger* has been announced by William Green, president of the American Federation of Labor. This is great news for 10,000 members of the American Newspaper Guild and brings ultimate victory for recognition of their organization by newspaper publishers nearer at hand. Also cheering to the newspapermen throughout the country is the fact, established by records of circulation men, that the circulation of the Newark *Ledger* has gone down forty per cent since the strike started and continues to go down. It is also noted that advertising has fallen off to some extent and this will be more marked at the beginning of February as several big advertisers have told the Newspaper Guild that they will quit the *Ledger* when the present monthly contracts expire.

Something of the sort is scheduled to drop hard on Joseph R. Knowland, publisher of the Oakland *Tribune* before long. Knowland fired three newspapermen for inefficiency shortly after they had become active in Guild affairs. They had been with the paper for ten years and their inefficiency developed simultaneously with their Guild activities. Now the Guild plans some new move on the *Tribune* after having done considerable damage to its circulation already.

Now the typographical, photo-engravers and stereotypers' unions have become concerned over the possibility that the newspaper publishers of the country will seek to withdraw from the newspaper code because of the recent demand of the National Labor Relations Board that Hearst put back into his job Dean S. Jennings who was fired from the San Francisco *Call-Bulletin* because of Guild activities. The unions have called a conference in Washington for today to consider this possible action of the newspapers. That will be interesting and mighty important to the newspapermen because newspapers are nothing but little lambs in the jaws of the printers' unions which can tie up a newspaper like a paper bag.

LINCOLN STEFFENS SPEAKING--

IT WAS Judge Ben B. Lindsey who granted Mrs. Douglas Fairbanks her divorce, and that means that it could not have been avoided. Lindsey has a passion and great skill for "fixing it all up" for married people and when he grants a divorce you may well know that there was nothing else to do.

ANYBODY that would like to know just where he is at in the streams of history should read Palme-Dutt's "Fascism and Social Revolution". He knows. He can't tell it very well but he tells it so that any attentive reader, with a desire to know, can get it there in that book, by close reading. And as I read it, I not only corrected my own spot on the chart, I kept calling to mind others who ought to read it. It would make them so much less dumb.

OUR MILLIONAIRES are shocked at the billions of dollars the government is spending on the unemployed and other distressed labor. We are doling out money to these poor as we used to do only to the rich. If he were not so serious about it all, I would call the President a grand satirist in real life. And if our business critics of the New Deal had any fun in them at all, I would advise them to beat him to it by raising wages, distributing purchasing power economically and then, next year, raising prices and plentiful profit. But the President is not humorous and the business men are too serious. The business men want nothing but cash, now.

You couldn't make a business man see that they could put off the revolution for a year or two.

THE QUESTION of free speech, etc. at the universities is worth a second thought. The demand for future leaders of some originality is obvious; I think, and many business men and statesmen will agree with me that far in conversation. They will agree, also, though separately, that the leaders of the future must not think what this generation think. Our thoughts or ideas or actions have failed. The next generation has got to think something else than we thought. They must not learn finally what we teach. It is essential then, as I see it, that all students should be encouraged, not to learn what we teach, but how to think, and a stimulant to free thought is free speech among the students. As I see it, then, and I'm saying it here, all this repression by the university authorities is quite wrong. Of course, I hear that

many members of our faculties agree that intellectual freedom is the very essence of college life, and defend their repression by reference to the legislature and to the board of reason which truly represents our old bad thinking which has got us into wars and the depressions.

* * *

CAPITALISTS may slumber, neither worrying nor raging. Several red parties are out here to do a certain job, one job which must be done. These representative reds are all fighting, one against the others, and it looks to the outsider like sabotage. And that they do not mean. My interpretation of these differing, hotly differing pinks and reds is that they have a false idea from our old capitalist culture: they still want to be right. They don't understand that their education under our old righteous culture is such that they cannot be right. Nobody knows and nobody can know under our crooked culture, under our crooked set-up and culture, what is right. We have had philosophies and sciences which have always turned out to be not true, not correct.

* * *

I KNOW a girl in Carmel who has so specialized or departmentalized her love emotions that she is perfectly clear on this, that marriage or love is one thing and having a child is quite another. No connection at all. She can imagine loving one man sincerely, and having a child with another man whom she may not love at all. I don't mean that she has this idea only, but obviously in conversation she convinces me that she sees things this way. This comes, I think, of never having put together all these incidents which go together.

* * *

BRISBANE has got the Japanese licked. He says that all we have to do, we Americans, to lick Japan in a war, is to arm, feed and finance the Chinese who are already at war with them. And that's true. But, first, we'd

have to stop helping the Japanese lick the Chinese. For, you know, don't you, that we are in with the other Imperialist powers—Britain, France, Japan—on the undeclared war to conquer and graft upon the poor Chinks who are so ruined that they provide a market which needs everything.

Brisbane's way to fight the Japanese is the way to solve all our other problems: depression, unemployment, strikes, corruption, crime. And that's the unthinkable, un-American way of stopping our hypocrisy.

How the Japanese would laugh at Brisbane's paragraph and mine; they know that we cannot put aside our hypocrisy.

* * *

A UNIVERSITY professor was down here the other day and told how at a meeting at his house of students and faculty, one of San Francisco's biggest business men was telling the students about the longshoremen's strike in San Francisco. To make a good point sure, he said that "football players from the universities served well as strike-breakers". Pausing for a reply or some demonstration of approval, he looked at his audience expectantly and was quite astonished to hear someone say with general approval:

"They would!"

He said also that footballers evidently did not rank as they had in his day, as idols of the campus, and his theory, which he offered as an explanation was that football had fallen into the disrepute of all big business.

"And of course college sports are big business," this professor of ethics remarked: "Business ruins everything it touches."

* * *

HE WAS making an unanswerable question and wound up by saying:

"This is true, isn't it?"

My answer was a question:

"When?"

He was flabbergasted. He had not thought that time is a dimension in ethics and metaphysics.

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January 18, 1935

"WE'LL HANG TOGETHER, OR ---"

BY GEORGE HEDLEY

EXHIBIT A: A preachers' meeting in Los Angeles. Question period, following an address on the San Francisco strik. An elderly clergyman: "Were these men, who were killed on the waterfront, actually Communists?" The speaker starts to give the facts—that Borodine had Communist affiliations, and Sperry had not. The clergyman interrupts: "All I wanted to say was that if they were Communists, it's a good thing they were killed." (In fairness to the remainder of the group one must record the loud cries of "Shame" that followed the remark.)

EXHIBIT B: My hostess, bidding me farewell: "But, Mr. Hedley, can't you help to secure justice for the Communists without associating with them so much?"

EXHIBIT C: My Socialist friend, a comrade of several strenuous (and unsuccessful) election fights: "You'd better be careful about your Communist contacts, George, or you'll find yourself losing your influence."

EXHIBIT D: The general agreement of California conservatives with the elderly clergyman.

EXHIBIT E: The general agreement of California liberals with my hostess.

EXHIBIT F: The general agreement of California Socialists with their party colleague.

The present argument is not addressed to the clergyman and his fellow conservatives: it is scarcely to be hoped that they will read Pacific Weekly. It is directed to liberals and Socialists, eager for a new order of things, but nervous about "too close identification" with other groups who share their eagerness without sharing their ideas of tactics and technique. The point at issue—let those shudder who will—is the United Front.

Liberals commonly avoid the United Front because they fear to be tabbed as "reds". Socialists usually oppose it on the ground that Communists are not to be trusted; a decreasing number of right-wingers add the contention that the gulf between "democratic" and "revolutionary" methods is too great to be bridged. There are facts enough to give strength to all three of these positions: are there enough to justify the uniform conclusion?

That liberals who associate with Communists, who defend them, who plead for their civil rights, are themselves promptly labelled "Communist", is too obvious to be debated. But are they the only liberals so described? The Student League for Industrial Democracy, whose journal carries on a persistent guerilla warfare with the National Student League, is assailed as violently as

ever was the N.S.L. itself. Mr. Upton Sinclair, loudly proclaiming his aversion to everything Communist, utterly silent about "vigilante" terrorism, was alleged by the press—and believed by thousands of the voters—to be a direct agent of Moscow. The Hearst papers, discussing a labor decision of a "New Deal" agency, captioned the article, "A Bolshevik Board". And, most startling if not most important, Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt herself is represented as involved in the Dillingite "Red Network".

Thus, to the liberal, the reply is that inevitably he will bear the "red" label, whether or not he has ever met a Communist party member or a genuine Communist sympathizer, as soon as and as long as he dares to question the present economic system, to speak for liberty under the constitution, to argue for high income taxes or for social insurance, to protest the use of legal and illegal force against striking workers—or even to voice the most gentle pacifism. The only alternative is to keep completely silent; and it is liberalism's habit of silence at a time of crisis that has brought it into current disrepute. The choice is one between frankness and ineffectiveness: the decision depends upon how much the liberal cares.

Another approach to freedom from red-phobia (for many a Socialist as well as for liberal "innocents") lies in meeting a Communist or two in *propria persona*. Doing this, one learns that "there's about as much human nature in some folks as in others . . ." Some Communists have quite forgotten Lenin's dictum *anent flexibility*—others know and practise it. Some are proletarian fundamentalists—others refrain from quoting the Marxian Bible *ad nauseam*. Some suspect every non-Communist on principle—others are friendly until they find reason to be otherwise. Some are Puritans, and some feel at home in Carmel. Some have a sense of humor and some don't. A "typical Communist" is as rare as a "typical Democrat": to realize this is to escape the danger of too facile categorizing. Cooperate with Communists? Which Communists? . . . And I must add my personal testimony that most of the working Communists I know (I'm on record elsewhere about the neo-Thomist orthodoxy of the N.S.L.) strike me as intelligent, reasonable, utterly sincere and wholly delightful people.

A more difficult problem is involved in the Socialist distrust of Communist technique. That numberless United Fronts have been wrecked through their exploitation for political purposes is not to be denied. (That the Socialists are in this matter guiltless is less easily to be established—but let's discuss

that some other time.) Orthodox Communism is frankly Jesuitical: *exitus ecta probat* is a fundamental item of its practical creed. That a sincere Socialist, once bitten, will be three or four times shy is not surprising. But what is he to do about it?

The answer, it seems to some of us, lies not in absolute divorce but in careful definition of the (companionate?) marriage contract. Since there are points on which Socialists and Communists disagree, it follows that a United Front on all issues is not to be expected. But since there are many in which they are in agreement, the desirability of co-operation in these—if it can be achieved in fairness and frankness—is scarcely to be questioned. The major example now before us involves the criminal syndicalism law, both in its place upon the statute books and in its present application to eighteen defendants in Sacramento. That the law in itself is vicious is the contention of everyone from the extreme left to as far right as the American Federation of Labor. That the present prosecution is an effort to block the successful organization of workers—principally agricultural—is admitted even by the realists among its staunch protagonists. That the defendants must be acquitted, for the sake of the liberties of us all, is a corollary inevitable for every believer in the rights of labor.

Sixteen of those now on trial, and one whose case will come up later, have committed themselves to the care of the International Labor Defense, whose connection with the Communist Party is scarcely a secret—though it makes a principle of defending all workers regardless of political affiliation. The other one of the present defendants, having joined the Workers' Party, is represented by an attorney brought into the case by the Non-Partisan Labor Defense. Money given for legal defense thus goes either to I. L. D. or to N. P. L. D. lawyers—or does not serve its purpose. Since the trial will be lengthened—and the legal expenses therefore increased—by the introduction of various forms of Marxian philosophy into question and testimony, the defense funds may be regarded as going partly for leftist propaganda. Does any Socialist or liberal honestly prefer, to this, that we shall not help to pay the fees and expenses involved in the work of Gallagher and Goldman? (The fees are ridiculously small; the expenses are held to minimum; but the total, for a trial that seems due to last three months, will far exceed the resources of the defense organizations.)

Even publicity for the trial must be cooperative to be effective. Why get out three or four or a dozen weekly bulletins if we can

concentrate our efforts and our information in one? Why use many dollars' worth of stamps to send material to mailing lists which contain many duplicates and not a few quadruples? Why hold separate and conflicting "mass meetings" when together we can pay for bigger halls, draw much larger audiences, secure bigger collections? "Socialism within one nation"—"the necessity of world revolution"—"faith in democratic process"—all these are at the moment irrelevant: the issue is whether or not fascist law is to imprison eighteen workers for up to fifty-six years, and to intimidate thousands of others into silent acceptance of a rotten system. Call it a "United Front" or not: the fact remains that at Sacramento we'll either work with Stalinites and Trotskyites, or do no useful work at all.

This must mean, as I said above, that we enter into no agreement to advance one or another economic or political philosophy. It means that joint publicity and joint meetings must stick to the single issue with which we're now concerned. It means that funds must be allocated by joint agreement, not by selfish competition. In the hotel room we, as individuals and party members, shall argue (as we have already) all the fine points of our various interpretations of the immortal Karl: but in court and in public our job is to show up the character of the law and the purpose of the prosecution, and above all to secure a triumphant acquittal. Admitting that on much we differ, we can clear the path for action on which we coincide. I, for one, do not propose to take part in a United Front for a dictatorship of the proletariat: am I thereby debarred from one against the dictatorship of wealth?

Even more hopelessly academic, at the moment, is the controversy over non-violence. The C. P. people say violence will be necessary, at the last, because violence will be used against them. The Trotskyists seem to urge more direct methods, to contend for greater initiative on the revolutionary side. But neither the slight and grey-haired Gallagher nor the stouter and equally grey-haired Goldman is likely to throw bombs at judge or prosecutor; and that the "true (Stalinist) Marxian" Lee Hung will wield an Oriental dagger on the bailiff, or that the "true (Trotskyist) Marxian" Norman Mini will use West Point marksmanship on the jury, seems equally improbable. If and when this, or anything like this, happens, some of us may approve and some of us may not. Today the struggle is non-violent—is within the bounds of judicial procedure and verbal persuasion. In fine, the theoretical Communists are using good old Socialist practice: has the Socialist any real excuse for standing aside?

What is true in Sacramento is true of practically every specific case which arises today. In all of them we must define our issues clearly. In all of them we must enter

our agreements in good faith, and maintain them with fidelity. In all of them we shall be useless—or worse—if fear of public opinion, or dispute on points of academic theory, or deliberate violations of compacts once accepted, keep us fighting under divided generalship. And if we thus divide—attend my word, my liberal and Socialist friends and comrades—we shall lose the battle not only for the Communists, but also

for ourselves. The Big Berthas of capitalist repression now bombard the extreme left, and we have felt only a desultory fire from shot-guns and .22s; but we're well within range, and the revolving gun-emplacements are well greased. If, looking out for our own skins today, we let the Communists fall—we'll be looking out for our own skins tomorrow!

BUBBLES OF LIFE LETTERS FROM AN ART STUDENT

DEAR Margaret:

I got your letter way last week, wanted to answer it immediately, but you know how such things are—at any rate I liked it very much, both poems or rather the poem and the jingle included.

But now I must begin to tell you about the exciting life I've been leading. School itself is so good that I can't think how to describe it. Hancock comes down every Friday, and every time he gives a criticism it's better—I mean it shows how really good he is—and, too, to be in the midst of a hard-working group is the most stimulating thing. A group made up of people who've worked in a half a dozen places. Altogether there're about twenty-eight people studying sculpture, so from that you can see what the atmosphere is like, with a good number of them trying for traveling scholarships. There're about fifteen girls in the class (boys and girls have separate classes). Two just back from studying at Fontainebleau, France,—three having studied nine months a couple of years ago in Munich—one just back from summer study at Chester Springs, Pa., under Leaslie, so we have a chance to compare methods, teachers, ideas, ways and means, etc. Several who have already had traveling scholarships—some that are really good—whose work is exciting. And they are almost all interesting people, with something behind them, a little culture. By the way, Sally Marlen is a scream—she keeps the class in good spirits and works now and then.

We've not had composition class yet but I seem to be making them fast and furiously. I've got five to show him. Here I seem to be able to collect my thoughts and concentrate better than ever before. Maybe it's because my room's so little that my thoughts can't wander very far. There're no dark corners or comfortable chairs for them to get lost or involved in. I keep the compositions on desk and dresser so that I can study them

as I lie in bed—Oh, it is really great—this concentration on what I want. And the more I work, the happier I am. (Even though there's all sorts of discouraging things about the technical end, etc.) I feel sometimes as though I've got to unlearn all I've learned. No wonder I was dissatisfied with last year—I got into some awful bad habits, and I'm trying to get out of them—perhaps I'll succeed, because this last figure shows some improvement, I think, at any rate I'm anxious to hear what He (with a capital H) will have to say about it.

And now, I'll begin to tell about the gay week I've had. Saturday, that I left off telling about in the last letter to family, didn't end when we put L. Plummer on the train for Bryn Mawr. Jim and I blew ourselves to a Movie. And it was the most beautiful picture I have ever seen. Every inch of it was studied, composed, caught just at the right moment—a foreign picture, called "The Blue Light", taken of the Dolomites in the Italian Tyrol country. The thread that held the thing together was one of their old legends. The picture showed this little village and the people, who lived at the foot of this beautiful waterfall and mountain. Everything was so deeply beautiful that it was too much—to see the sun rise on the mountains, or the goats' milk being heated in a brass kettle, or the sheep and the goats grazing, or the breath of the people seen in the cold air, the wonderful old men and women who lived in the village, light in the trees. We came out of it in a daze—made me think—or rather it made me recall, the wonderful beauty, not the same as in the picture, but equally as great, of the days I spent on the bronze hills down the coast when I wandered alone up the redwood canyons and saw the full moon rise over the mountains, and I wondered how we can bear to live in cities. And since we have so little time, why not tend sheep on the top of a mountain, play a flute, live and be happy. Everyone is talking about the picture—be-

tween brushing teeth my neighbor and I discuss it. She's from Norway and she is a very nice person. Has a grown son and daughter, and a job, and wonders, too, about our "civilization".

And now to the next item of interest. In the middle of last week, when I was all settled for the evening—that is, pads and pillows and books, etc.—who should call up but Jimmy of the old Hahnel days, so speedily slipping on dress, etc.—rather etc. and dress—I met him on the fourteenth floor, where there is a very nice reception room for just such purposes of entertainment—radio, piano, newspapers, and the "Y" bunch of girls and boys. Well, we talked over old times, new times, etc., and went to the Pop Concert Sunday night and to a little Russian tea shop afterward, for a very nice evening!! Because he's a very nice and interesting boy.

Now comes the big spree. I'll not spend another cent for a month on entertainment but this was worth it. Jane Sherman persuaded me that I just couldn't miss seeing "Tristan and Isolde", and so last night we went at 8 o'clock, and stood in line for the cheapest seats up in the third balcony and heard "Tristan" for five and a half hours,

which passed so, O, so quickly, but so full. It makes me think of "The Magic Mountain" bit about music, "its enhancing method of measuring time imparts a spiritual awareness and value to its passage"—"it articulates time; it can shorten it and yet enhance its value both at once". I'm still all stirred up from it. She had seen or heard it done in Munich three or four times but says nothing can compare to the way they did it last night; that I'll never hear it that good again. And that's what all the people who know about opera are saying here. It was a German company. They had wonderful modern stage sets, the kind that have steps and different levels, nice shapes, etc. And we, sitting way up on top, leaning over the rail as far as possible the whole time, trying to see it all. Mary Blaine said the lighting and effects of the back drops were wonderful, and that we missed some of the beautifully composed pictures when the actors were at the back of the stage—all the attitudes, etc. were just right. The Philadelphia Orchestra, of course, was good. It's a wonder—with something like 117 pieces—really real music. The singers were all good, but I don't see how they do it. I think Isolde sang for hours on end. Knowing the story it was

perfectly easy to follow. And the music is so filled with longing, sorrow and joy of the human soul that—again I'll say that it was almost too much.

There is one more opera this year that I want to save my "amusement" fund for—that is, if I am still in the vicinity next April. It's DeBussy's "Pelleas and Melisande", which will undoubtedly be a great contrast to this one. But enough raving. Wish you were here to see and hear them too.

The Music Academy is a great old building, with lots of atmosphere and wonderful acoustics. All the students and people who really love music sit up in the amphitheatre or third balcony. Standing in line hours before each concert, making a line a couple of blocks long and then practically falling out of their seats trying to see and hear.

By the way, after having read "The Magic Mountain" with all its speculation on time and space I think you would be able to get something out of "Tertium Organum". I know I'd like to try it again.

Love to all,
Helen.

WHAT A COLLEGE SENIOR THINKS ABOUT

BY JAMES BROUGHTON

THE white moment of youth, free but motionless, active but cloistered, has turned black.

I observe my fellow classmates, conscious of the black; they, like myself, are going to graduate in June. They, too, are going to meet "the world", who is either a monstrous, heartless ogre like a vision in Grimm, or a gently back-patting doorman, swinging wide the gate. But having either conception we know we have been guarded in warmth, inviolate, in order to be tossed out coldly, unguarded, vulnerable.

One of my classmates is reading Walter B. Pitkin's "New Careers for Youth". He has almost finished it and his face is still puzzled; his fingers scratching his scalp. He wonders if he would not have gained more from reading Dashiell Hammett or Thorne Smith. What is he thinking about? What are the others thinking about? What am I thinking about?

Someone has just asked me: "What are you going to do when you graduate?" and I have smiled like the others and said: "Oh, I

don't know." But all of us know one fact; that we have bodies, with stomachs, blood, intestinal tracts, cells that must be kept alive. How? By food. And where are we going to get it? A job, any job, but a job. We aren't going on relief; we aren't going to beg. We have had four years of university training. We are smart, we have taken a lot of courses, we know that Charlemagne ruled from 768 to 814, that there is an economic law of supply and demand, that glass is a poor conductor for electricity, that noblesse oblige means "rank imposes obligation". We know a lot of things.

But somehow they don't signify much now; none of them will tell us how to assure ourselves of eating. Shaken up in a box, flipped three times and emptied on a table they don't spell J-O-B. The job was left out of all the courses; the important thing now was left out and all we can do with the notes we have taken is to tear them up. That's what the boy who is reading Walter B. Pitkin is thinking about; what the others and myself are thinking.

My friend Tim is a good example of what happens, because I know others like him. Tim was a dreamer, but he had a modest success in college. He had talent for writing and got printed in the campus papers; he was trying the magazines outside, hopeful. We were looking for good things from Tim; he held our aura of expectation and encouragement. He told me he had conviction, that he would never let the Thor of a machine age wreak vengeance upon him; he was himself, Tim, and no slave to mammon or manna . . .

A year ago Tim graduated, but there was a time there when I thought he would pay a prof to flunk him so his degree could be postponed. During that last year he had written hardly a line of stories we knew were in him. He became fearful and frantic, his face hollow, his eyes wild. He was looking for a job, a job. When someone asked him about writing, he snorted and tried to make his scorn real; to scorn the trust we had in his integrity; to scorn his earlier enthusiasm; the desire for expression, the de-

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sire to be himself, alone and completely.

What had he once said about a modern Thor? Tim snorted. He had more important things to think about: a job. Didn't he have gastric juices that must be kept active? Tim left school, his wild eyes searching; soon he had a job all right—working for some oil company in a gas station! Last time I saw him he was thinking gasoline, carbon drag; anti-knock. He had put aside all his dreams and desires about writing—that was the past, the fortunate frivolity, the white moment of his youth no more. "College—Jeez, that monastery?" he said, but his eyes still were not at peace.

Seeing Tim made me pretty mad. It wasn't right, those stories, that awareness of his being killed by anti-knock. He didn't have to do it with such a wrench, such pain, without finding freedom.

I am a senior now and I am asking myself questions, remembering I have a soul and an appetite: Which is more important, writing or eating? Being yourself or a digestive organ? How can I write or be myself without eating? I am thinking about the future, remembering Tim and others like him, how they changed that last year when their gladness eluded them, their confidence, their gratitude in being alive lost. They were wild-eyed, searching for a job, no longer grateful, no longer themselves—a job, a job, mister, a job, please, anything so I can eat.

I have been educated since I was seven years old. A couple of months now and there will be no more textbooks. I don't want to do what Tim did, or what my other friend, Joseph, did. Joseph had as much trouble as Tim, but I think that perhaps he is now the unhappier. Joseph was worried, too; he walked the pavements of the city for a while; I remember the night he broke down and sobbed. And then he came back to college and signed up as a graduate, working for a master's degree, a PhD. He's still at it. Joseph should be answering a dozen telephones at once, or walking a tightrope, or cooking pancakes. But the enrollment in the department of graduates has risen astonishingly in the last few years in all the universities.

Come, all ye heartsick young people, come and do a thesis, avoid a cold dip, take a warm bath in scholarship. Come and let your eyes get sad, your shoulders emaciated and etiolate; wear spectacles and disintegration. Remember you have intellect, keep intellect and reason alive. How will you live? Gnaw the bones of Milton, of Plato, Herodotus, Goethe, Shakespeare.

Fungus growth are these students, and they have the gray green color of fungus; they are the dead, clinging, fearful of life. I think it is better to be wild-eyed. There is a deeper fear in Joseph. At least Tim had guts enough to go out and get his carbon-drag job and hold it.

But why can't a service station man know

about the prosody of Milton or the war of Spanish Succession? He hasn't stopped living. His time upon the earth is still now; he is still in the world in the twentieth century. I cannot understand why intellect should be so far removed from eating.

Maybe college only teaches us to be fungi. We get to be awfully good at copying down what other people say; we take notes in our books until our fingers hurt. We have to get it exactly, no slip, memorize what is told us by these Lesser Divinities on platforms so that we may say it back to them and get a B in the course.

This has gone on for four years. I was studying Elizabethan drama, but when I saw Tim wild-eyed last year, he and his friends, and Joseph hanging on taking sedatives of Greek, I thought there must be something unbalanced about a society that could not find a decent place for these men. So I took some courses in political science, and social science, and economics, and I discovered that the social system is not only unbalanced; it is all wrong. That was certainly a simple explanation of Tim's eyes and Joseph's thesis. I wondered: if the present system is all wrong and assures us nothing, then isn't it up to us to go out and change the social order?

I raised my hand in the classroom and asked the question. The class chuckled. The Lesser Divinity on the platform held up his hands in admonition. Never. Never do that. In the beginning there was the word; it was God's word, world without end. The social system is wrong, says the professor; it is very wrong. But you must not be a communist. Communism won't do; it is messy. Nor must you be a reactionary. The past is dead. Well, what am I to do about it? Just think it over, says the professor.

Of course, he does not want us to go out of his classroom and change the social order so that we may have some place in it. He would not have anything to talk about and he would be labelled a "red"; he would be out of a job, and then he could not eat.

The social system is wrong, the social system is wrong, heigh ho the merrio, the social system is wrong. Gather round, lads and lassies, ye unhappy despairing ones, gather round and do nothing about improving your lot.

But just because the professor's stomach is bulging with fat is no proof that we do not want to eat, also. We want to know about jobs; where we can get them; why there aren't any. It is money that keeps the blood flowing; money that makes the glands secrete. A friend of mine tells me cheerfully that there are only three choices before every young man: 1) the church; 2) political revolutionaryism; 3) suicide. Examples: T. S. Eliot, Edmund Wilson, Hart Crane. I shudder. 1, 2, 3, the eternal triangle, the trinity. Come on, boys, the game's up. Take your pick.

The social system is wrong, but is it all the fault of the social system? Capitalism has kept a lot of red and white corpuscles flowing regularly. We've got to go a little deeper and discover why we have capitalism and why we have red and white corpuscles. Something made each one and there is a real connection between them. Where did we get the stomachs we are now so sure we possess?

There were some boys last June unlike Tim and Joseph who said "good morning" to the genial doorman as they went through the gate. Some steeled their fear and dove. It is all a lot like learning to dive. Perhaps we have been hearing lectures on "How To Be Afraid" for four years. Why can't we stand up and claim the world as our own, not cringe and quiver at an imaginary ogre, but hold the whole splendor from the planet to the peanut in our hands? Why not? Is there any reason why not? I wonder if I might not suggest to that boy who has put aside Walter B. Pitkin's "New Careers for Youth" that he read the New Testament instead. We might well read it together. Perhaps we shall be able to understand better about our stomachs.

WINGED DEATH

A jewel of softness and of cunning beauty
Gliding in the slow and fluid air,
In undulous and tiny balance, fixed me
With the gleaming blackness of its eye
And the incredible churning of its wings;
Circled with deliberate dainty ceremony
And with impatient functioning,
The blue-red passion of the Echium bloom.
How swift and savage in its eagerness
This gleaming heartless lancing mouth!
That with unerring countless dagger strokes,
Thrusts into the simple ravished vulva
Of those open patient purple lips
And stabs with thoughtless death the quiet
germ
Of insect life that lies in nascent dream,
Lulled by the waxey tongue of harmless bees
And dull rhythm of the sandy waves,
That roll at summer ease on nearby shore.
Stabbed in sleep, but chemically restored
By magic life into a shimmering green
And ruby-throated grace of quivering
power.
That flashes terror through the mazey jungle
Of waving stems and tangled life of leaves,
Then hurdles over garden fence and wires
And drives its pulsing soft and flexing life
With spurning speed into the endless blue.

—ERIC O'DONOVAN

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COME NOW, MR. BEHRMAN!

BY WINTHROP RHUTLEGE

THE fact that Hollywood has added both to the title and to the story of S. N. Behrman's "Biography", giving the former more sexiness and the latter more absurd inconsistency, is only a very minor tragedy. Mr. Behrman's own intellectual confusion, which appeared in the play and which the film did nothing to clarify, is a very major one. Major because Behrman is one of the finest craftsmen now writing plays in these States and a man with an amazingly civilized approach to any subject he chooses to write about.

His play's outcome was, from his own premise, entirely logical. The work was devoted to the job of proving that the young woman artist and her youthful magazine editor lover were temperamentally and intellectually irreconcilable. Having proved this the play ended by separating them in a cruel and bitter quarrel. The film, renamed "Biography of a Bachelor Girl", proved the same thing, but in the last hundred feet of celluloid it threw Ann Harding and Robert Montgomery into a clinch which the audience was asked to accept as wiping out all that had gone before.

The major fault of the play, as before stated, is Behrman's outlook. He believes in the efficacy of tolerance. His entire play reeks with pleading for it; in some mysterious manner he seems to believe it is the chief thing the world needs. He even asks his audiences to be tolerant toward a Tennessee candidate for senator, a fellow of greedy

heart and mean soul, a chap who will begin doing great harm the moment he assumes his toga.

Of course the trouble with Behrman is that he feels the highly civilized man's repugnance against such primitive things as hate, strife, revolt and killing. He wants the world to be full of nice people, but overlooks the fact that only well-fed and comfortable people can be nice people and that the way society is stacked at present it is mathematically impossible for anything like all people to be well-fed and comfortable.

He shuns the basic realities that render futile his philosophy of tolerance. He feels revolt in the world about him but he never traces it to its source. His characters are a young magazine editor with desire to revenge himself upon a society he resents by dragging the private scandals of the great into the spotlight, a young woman third rate artist who has played house in the capitals of Europe, the aforementioned senatorial timber and a moth-eaten composer or two.

The young editor's nearest approach to reality is his recounting of the story of how he came to hate society when his father, "a gentle little man with blue eyes", was killed in a coal mine strike riot. Thereafter, in order to revenge himself upon predatory society, he devotes himself to filling scandal sheets with inside stories of the sex-lives of nation's bigwigs. The answer probably is that Behrman is no closer to the actual facts of life as it is today than is his hero in

this film.

The story ends with the artist finally deciding not to publish her biography because of the discomfiture it will cause a perfectly nice senator or two, and the youth angrily repudiating her because of her retreat. The play ends on a note of appeal for tolerance and points out that society's revolts are not nice people because they haven't enough of it. I join Lincoln Steffens in being pretty weary of all these nice civilized intelligent thinkers who are content to stop thinking where comfort ends.

* * *

The Shubert Follies, dignified (by Billie Burke's permission) with the Ziegfeld trade mark, are again with us. Take away the fine Rabelaisian clownery of Fannie Brice and Willie Howard and you have pretty much a piece of glorified Fanchon and Marco. Harrison and Fisher, who probably were excellent adagio dancers before they chose to attempt to scale the highbrow, make a rather pathetic attempt to become Kreutzberg and Georgi. The result is utterly meaningless flamboyance which the first night audience, composed of the town's best people, accepted as art and enjoyed immensely.

* * *

Stepin Fetchit gives an amusing performance in the new Will Rogers picture "County Chairman" (St. Francis). The rest is the usual Rogers homely hokum. And the rest of the movies in town are too horrific to reflect upon.

A SAMPLE OF HEARST INJUSTICE

BY JEAN WINTHROP

(Editor's note—These facts concerning the treatment of Redfern Mason, veteran music critic, by the San Francisco Examiner were published in PACIFIC WEEKLY of December 28 and are reprinted on request.)

THAT SMALL gray-haired man who walks about the streets reading Latin to himself—probably the most distinguished music critic on the Pacific Coast—well, he's the latest victim of the concerted attack of the American Newspaper Publishers' Association on the San Francisco Bay Metropolitan Newspaper Guild.

A scholar, an English gentleman, well past middle-age—it's Redfern Mason of the San Francisc Examiner. You may have seen

him at all the musical events in San Francisco in the last twenty-one years. He's been music critic for the Examiner that long.

Now he's out of a job, because he dared to be the chairman of the Examiner chapter of the American Newspaper Guild.

The publishers didn't say "You're fired for Guild activities". They didn't even fire Mr. Mason at all. They know too well the disturbance that follows employers who violate the famous section 7A of the National Industrial Recovery Act—the famous "guarantee" of the right of employees to organize in groups of their own choosing.

They merely made it intolerable for Mr. Mason to hold his job.

They merely said to a man who has lived

music, and written music and whose whole forte has been music the best part of his life:

"You will not be required to handle music for the Examiner any longer."

"Does that mean I'm fired?" Mr. Mason asked his managing editor.

"Oh, no, you're not fired. You wait around. We'll find something for you to do," was the answer.

This was at the height of the opera season. Ada Hanifin, comparatively inexperienced in writing music criticism, comparatively ignorant of the entire subject, took over the opera reviews. Mr. Mason waited around.

He was not threatened with being fired. He was not threatened with a reduction in

salary. He was just deprived of his function.

Finally he was told that he could have the hotel beat—a beat reserved for cub reporters, or for old, broken-down newspapermen, too decrepit physically or mentally for anything else. This scholarly, internationally known critic was told he could make something "very colorful" out of taking notes of arrivals and departures from San Francisco hotel registers. He was told there was no hurry. He could take all the time he needed to prepare himself for his new work.

Even at this he did not rebel—or, at any rate, resign—until Alexander Fried, music critic of the San Francisco Chronicle was hired by the *Examiner* at a substantial increase in salary, and hung his hat in Mr. Mason's office. Mr. Mason resigned.

Now, Mr. Fried was not a member of the Newspaper Guild.

Mr. Mason was an ardent, articulate and active member.

It was just ten days before his music column was taken away from him that he had been elected chairman of the *Examiner* chapter of the Guild. Oddly enough—a coincidence if ever there was one—Louis Burgess, editorial writer, had been fired from the *Examiner* just exactly ten days after he was elected chairman of the *Examiner* Guild chapter.

The regional Labor Board had decided after six months that there was "insufficient evidence to show" Mr. Burgess was fired from the *Examiner* for Guild activities. So the day after that decision against the Guild and favoring the publishers, was rendered, the Oakland Tribune fired three Guild members. And, oddly, Mr. Mason's difficulties with the *Examiner* began just two days after he had written a personal letter to all *Examiner* Guild members urging them to support more actively the Guild fight on the Tribune for the triple firing.

The only reason given Mr. Mason by the *Examiner* for taking away the music column from him after twenty-one years of service, was that his work, of late, had been "spiteful".

When Mr. Mason asked his managing editor for an example of the spitefulness, the managing editor replied:

"I have been told there was spitefulness. I don't know of an example."

With the *Examiner* it was "spitefulness".

With the Tribune it had been "inefficiency" on the part of the three employees, whose aggregate service amounted to 26 years—a sudden inefficiency just after they began leading the Guild chapter there—and "economy", so much economy that they were given two weeks advance pay each when they were fired. But with the American Newspaper Publishers' Association it's not "spitefulness", or "inefficiency" or "economy"—it's the American Newspaper Guild.

To be sure, Mr. Mason in a radio address, and in his column during the current

opera season, had taken a few pokes at Society with a capital S; had suggested the opera was developing into more of a fashion show than a musical event—but then what music critic has not cried over this at one time or another? Mr. Mason had been taking pokes at it for years. Furthermore, Mr. Mason has been the stormy petrel of the music world of the West ever since he came here. That's why the *Examiner* hired him, kept him, featured him. They liked controversy and knew he started it. They knew it helped circulation.

To be sure, they had some letters this year from Socialites with wounded vanities (the chips fell where they might) who protested Mr. Mason's remarks. But then, jittery Socialites had been doing that for years. There had always been more letters of praise than letters of protest. Also, after Mr. Mason ceased writing music criticism there was a storm of mail from his following, including those who had objected to some of his observations, urging, demanding that he be restored to the music department. He was not restored.

It was even reported that the *Examiner* representatives went to the San Francisco Chronicle to arrange things so that Mr. Mason would not be hired by the Chronicle after his resignation. In some circles this would be called blacklisting. Whatever you call it, it goes to prove the solidarity of the boss' union in which to date, as Mr. Winthrop Rutledge puts it, there have been no scabs.

The Guild planned to take legal recourse to labor boards to fight the discrimination against Mr. Mason, the coercion of a Guild member. There was no attempt to make a public demonstration in a case the publishers had handled so craftily.

JUST A LITTLE SOMETHING . . .

He looked about at the flowers with a considering air. He was a squareish man, not young, with a singular look of innocence about him. This was belied by his wide hat, which was worn at a rakish angle; somehow it suggested the gentlemen gamblers of our grandfather's day. His black suit carried out that impression.

"I want something," he said, with a wide, comprehensive gesture, "I want something . . . you know . . . to hand to someone." Thumb and forefinger together, he indicated the act.

"Oh?" I said, rather blankly.

"Yes . . . You understand . . . Just a little something . . . To hand to someone . . . Now, these roses . . ."

We both dubiously regarded the roses.

"They're yesterday's," I said.

"I see . . . But perhaps one . . . or two . . ."

I fished around and plucked out three of the most youthful appearing. He took them in his hand, and held them away from him; he seemed to be looking at them as from a distance with half-closed eyes. Then he turned and looked at me.

"They don't seem to mean anything," he said.

Apogetically I admitted that they didn't. I took them from his hand and put them back in the bowl with their disconsolate sisters.

"Now, the marigolds," he said. "How much are they?"

"Fifteen cents a dozen."

"Supposing I have some of them."

"A dozen?" I asked, practically.

"Just a bunch . . . You understand . . . To hand to someone . . ."

Again his thumb and forefinger indicated the act. I counted out a dozen; at that moment I dared not subject my mentality to the strain of computing a fraction of fifteen.

"I love marigolds," he said.

"They're very bright," I agreed, looking at them fondly; I felt a sense of safety in contemplating them.

I retired to wrap them. When I returned he had got out the three roses once more and was looking upon them with some favor.

"And I'll take these, too."

He followed me as I went around to wrap them.

"Ah, such a day," he said. "It's the most perfect weather one could imagine. Now, if we could only have found a rose to match the day!"

"We can't always make those connections," I murmured.

I was a little startled at the unexpected laugh that burst from him.

"Yes, you're right. We can't indeed! That's very good."

In a daze I handed him his flowers wrapped in their green wax paper.

"So sorry we didn't have just what you wanted," I said.

"Oh, that's all right. It doesn't matter really . . . Just a little something . . . You know . . . Just something to hand to someone . . . You understand."

"Of course," I said.

—A. N.

CARMEL SHOP

The gabled roof is just too quaint,
And all that umber and ochre paint.
My dear, just see those winding stairs—
The flower pots in flashy pairs!

And then in just a month or two,
That sign—so crude—all red and blue;
"Closing Out-The Towne and Gowne".
We really tried: it won't go downe.

—ELIZABETH HAYES

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THE UNIVERSITIES

STANFORD SLUMBERS

By W. A. MILLIS

CALIFORNIA college life during the past few months has been upset by what both optimists and Hearst writers, for different reasons, of course, call a "student revolt". The main efforts of the student fight against campus fascism have centered at "the northern and southern branches" of the University of California. What has been the reaction at Stanford University, which has always been conservative, to such so-called "revolts"? Has anything happened at the stronghold of Wilbur and Hoover?

The first obligation of the honest inquirer is to question the reality of the university's motto: *Let the winds of freedom blow.* Under that principle all university assembly speakers take many a slam at New Dealers, Sinclairites, Socialists and Communists (all of whom are lumped in the same boat) and urge proceeding, politically and economically "at a walk". But that is about as far as Stanford's "freedom" goes. Independent student publications and organizations are silently but effectively suppressed. The thing to remember is that Dr. Wilbur is too intelligent to go off into the paeans of nazi-nationalism with which Provost Moore of U.C.L.A. so ably distinguished himself. In general, the policy of the administration is to let the students go ahead and organize; then nullify and suppress them.

Following what on the surface appears to be a liberal policy, the administration allows campaign debates and straw votes, allows the publication of the faculty-supervision-independent News, and officially recognizes the Student League for Industrial Democracy (L.I.D.), which is a section of the Socialist Party.

The News started its second year last fall as the organ of a group headed by Bill Rogers, son of Will. The first issue commented on Dr. Wilbur's welcoming address attack on the New Deal, interviewed Ella Winter on the state campaign, hit out at the gasoline-and-water-don't-mix policy of the administration. Nothing has openly been heard of News since then.

While the L.I.D. had been recognized as a campus organization and had been allowed to sponsor, with the Walrus Club of econ. majors, a talk by Norman Thomas in "Fascist Trends in American Education", it was refused a Quad room for a meeting featuring Miss Celeste Strack, expelled U.C.L.A. stu-

dent. Dr. Wilbur replied to L.I.D. officials that he would "need time to consider the matter".

In the faculty of Stanford University you will find a few liberals who express themselves. But the majority of the faculty, as in all universities, naturally have an eye for a higher job. They act accordingly.

On the Board of Trustees, which, of course, includes Mr. Hoover, you will find Paul Shoup of the Southern Pacific Railroad, and Harry Chandler, publisher of the Los Angeles Times. The majority of the members of the board are San Francisco business men. Obviously they are all liberal men.

As officials of the student body you will find the usual run of incipient politicians. Student Marvin Kahn, with all his virtues, is not much different from the Jim Farleys of this world.

Daily Editor Stan Beubaire for a time was greatly aroused over the affairs at U.C.L.A. and U.C. In a short time he shelved his indignation and has since devoted his editorials to the weather, the honor societies and why Cal shouldn't sing "The Cardinals Be Damned". At the present time Mr. Beubaire appears to be under the protective wing of Mr. Hearst, since that estimable gentleman, according to accepted and self-evident story, financed a holiday junket to Washington for a "conference" of college editors.

We must face the facts of the matter. Those facts show that the students of Stanford University are extremely conservative in politics and economics. Furthermore, most don't give a damn about what is going on in the world outside. Only 800 out of 3600 students showed enough interest in the state campaign to cast votes in the straw ballot. Of course there are a few individuals who want to learn the truth about our world. But the majority, hoping to "enjoy" college life while they may, take no interest in the chaos beyond the entrance to Palm Drive.

As a group there is no interest in the struggle against poverty in the midst of plenty, against war and fascism, against Mr. Hearst's and the Legion's brand of jingo nationalism. There is no interest in the struggle to make America an industrial and economic democracy.



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BOOKS

TELLING ALL

NIJINSKY, by Romola Nijinsky, his wife. (Simon & Schuster).

(Reviewed by Robin Howe)

It is amazing, the dignity inherent in an intelligent woman's acceptance of things as they are. If one is going to tell all, this is the way to do it. The biographer of Nijinsky might well hesitate before so much incendiary material, so much which, omitted, would encourage rumor to run riot as it has always done about this fantastic genius, yet which, included, would risk making a vulgarly sensational volume unworthy of its subject. But when the biographer is his wife and one chapter is calmly headed: "The friendship between Sergei de Diaghileff and Vaslav Nijinsky" and another "Mariage avec Dieu" (a simple, civilized account of the schizophrenia which leaves Nijinsky today dreaming his dreams in a sanatorium in Kreuzlingen), how many demons are not exorcized!

Much more than the life of one man, its author has made this a history of the ballet of our time through the vivid individuals who made its history. One has the impression of a brilliant but accurate, objective mind; taking instinctively the long view of things and betraying personal feeling scarcely at all, so that her book rings true through all the flamboyance of the life it describes. It makes other biographies by women seem what Nijinsky would have called so much Isadora Duncan, (which is to say, a good job is not easy, you have a new technique, your own technique, but there ~~is~~ somewhere in any good job. This must be technique, there must be good hard Nijinsky knew and it was in his life and it is in this book about him.)

Not the least interesting bit is the picture Mme. Nijinsky gives of a daughter of Eve in pursuit of her desire. The very youthful daughter of a distinguished Hungarian actress, she became fascinated by Nijinsky and the ballet and campaigned like an elderly general first for a place in the life of the ballet, then for Nijinsky's attention. This barely gained she spent her life willing him to love her like any medieval maid busy with magic runes. It is the European woman in her most feminine, her most deadly, her most powerful aspect, (one which we granddaughters of Jane Addams and Mrs. Pankhurst have forsaken, only half knowing what we did.)

Perhaps the most extraordinary thing in

a book full of extraordinary things is the portrait conveyed of Sergei de Diaghileff. Only autocratic imperial Russia could have produced such a figure, and Mme. Nijinsky's portrayal of him is a masterpiece, achieved as it is almost entirely through simple statements of fact, dates, places, people, set down without comment, for the reality of that almost incredible world, pre-war 20th century Russia, has color and vitality enough for a dozen works of fiction. To Diaghileff men like Fokine, Bakst, Massine, Mordkin, Nijinsky, Stravinsky, to some degree Roerich, and a dozen others owed their careers; practically single-handed he arranged an exhibition of French Impressionists in Russia at a time when every move had to be made through the French and Russian Foreign Offices; and as all the world knows he first brought the Russian Imperial ballet out of Russia.

It was of great significance to both men that in St. Petersburg, in the early days of Nijinsky's career, Stravinsky was one of his close friends among the group who owed their greatest artistic opportunities to the flair of Diaghileff for gifted men. Stravinsky was commissioned by Diaghileff to write the "Fire Bird" while he was still a student in the composition classes at the Conservatory. Every important work of Stravinsky, the "Fire Bird," "Petrouchka," "The Sacre du Printemps," "Pulcinella," "Renard," "Apollo Musagete," the operas "Mavra" and "Rossignol" and the oratorio "Oedipus Rex," all were first given by Diaghileff.

The difficulties which Diaghileff's jealousy and *manie de grandeur* made for Nijinsky, darkening the latter's last years in the world, have not succeeded in embittering Mme. Nijinsky nor in tempting her to belittle the extraordinary power of Diaghileff's personality and the magnificence of the unique role he played as impresario of Russian art in western Europe. It is more like the Thousand and One Nights than 20th century Europe. And it is all quite gone.

As for Nijinsky himself: one is reminded of the experiments in eugenics carried on by a French biologist who was weary of the assumption that only the large and strong and nervously healthy plants should be perpetuated. He undertook to see what could be done with the weaker, the erratic in growth, the less accountable strains, and produced blooms of incomparably greater beauty, genius in the flower world, the work of imaginative gods at play. Their only dis-

advantage was a purely scientific one: they were unpredictable, one could not reproduce them at will.

SPRUNG LIKE AN AN ARROW FROM THE BOW OF DARK

NOT MINE TO FINISH, by Genevieve Taggard. (Harper & Bros.) \$2.

(Reviewed by Sara Bard Field)

SOME TEN or more years ago Genevieve Taggard, "glad with the windy trip", her face "like noon flowers", said to me in reproach for a certain poem I had written, "we poets who have escaped the imprisonment of Christianity must never deify sorrow". I, who was older and tragedy-wise, said, "No, not deify it unless we deify its other face "like noon flowers," said to me in reverent homage for the special sculpture it performs on the soul".

Now Genevieve Taggard, older and also tragedy-wise herself, discovers that of life's double-bladed instrument, sorrow has the keener edge to perform the more radical operations the soul's shaping requires. For, contrary to light thinking, soul is composed of matter harder than basalt. It can not be shaped like malleable gold with a hammer but only with a chisel and knife.

This latest book from Miss Taggard's pen, so beautifully titled "Not Mine To Finish", is saturated with sorrow but never sodden or sticky with it. She tells us in a poem significantly called "Return of the Native", that she is stranded in a "land permanently sad". She affirms in "Try Tropic" that:

Nothing can cure and nothing kill
What ails your eyes, what cuts your pulse
in two.
And not kill you.

She admits in "Changes in the Soul" she now sees "clouds moving winter-dull and dense" and that "shadows come in winter-darkened patches". She is desperately alive to the omnipresence of sorrow. Sometimes it is slow-paced and analytical as in the most pretentious poem in the book, "Evening-Love-of-Self":

Tell me, will someone, why the heart
Aches as it walks this planet, why the
eyes,
So prone to error, still see in the end and
never
See what the heart has named for its own
glory.

Sometimes it is quick-paced and bitter as in "Try Tropic": "Earth has no zone to work against your ill." Again it is Biblically large and terrible in its poignancy and

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simple directness of appeal:

Over the wall, over the wall's top
I have seen rising waters, waters of
desolation.

Indeed in the poems, "To the Powers of Darkness", "To the Powers of Desolation", "No More This Home", "Two in a Dark Tower", sorrow's grip is unendurable. And once sorrow is caught in an unforgettable metaphor large as itself. This is in the last poem in the book of which more later.

But "sprung like an arrow from the bow of the dark" comes her "Lark" which those who saw it in *The Saturday Review* are glad to have between covers, and there is her "Answer to 'The Trance'" ("The Trance" being the previous poem about Evil):

O heart,—O be intrepid
You know the evil source. You know the
force, you know
Men are not rightly torpid
Nor is living stupid.

There is "Peace Like the Myrtle", a lyrical prayer for serenity which achieves its own answer. Also, despite the dark way, she still believes in the moon-maidens "in love with possibility, seducing from the Void the Event". Such affirmation, such faith as real as pain itself and in spite of pain is a Himalayan achievement. Notwithstanding their metaphysical bias, their (for me) too great obscurity in spots, their highly subjective phrasing they are triumphant in another respect. They are not mere word patterns. They are never clever. They have not been transfigured in stone by this Medusa called Modernity. In the sterile area of Modern Verse where poems stalk about like mechanized skeletons it is good indeed to find a body of poems with a heart that beats and nerves that quiver and with a sensitized flesh. Such feeling would be invaluable even if under less rigorous poetic discipline than Miss Taggard's. No mother can read "Monologue for Mothers" and not feel it is pulsing autobiography.

Notwithstanding this mature emotional and intellectual content, this largesse of giving, I feel the poems are, in many instances, written in limbo. Miss Taggard would not like that. She uses that word with aversion but she uses it six times in the forty-five poems as if the word came from some subconscious awareness of the dim threshold she has not yet passed. To one who has walked in darkness the stride into limbo requires seven league boots and titanic endurance. Circle on circle of hell is passed before that translucent corridor between darkness and light is reached. He who gains it will be sure of the final beatific vision. Until then some fog, some blur must inevitably enwrap the poem. In Miss Taggard's case the blur seems to show most in her rhythms. They bother the ear. They annoy the brain even

while the spirit is awed by the substance. They do not seem inevitable. There is too often a snapping off of the last line as if she shears of Atropos clicked before Lachesis had completed her lineal measurement. Sometimes the short lines snarl. One has the feeling Miss Taggard is searching for her own technique—"woman and poem in limbo". She becomes self conscious and mannered who is so much "at leisure from herself", so simple and direct. All her virtues: her passionate feeling, her subtle mind, her awareness of poetic values triumph over rather than merge with her technique. They arrive in port carrying her measures as cargo. In rare instances only do they wing the poems along.

Here is food for thought. She who escaped "the pale Galilean" and the "world grown gray with his breath" closes her book with the sign of the cross. Does this mean she has followed T. S. Eliot back into the Medieval faith? Never. Miss Taggard is a revolutionist. She believes in salvation by economic change—that is social salvation. But she is a poet. She knows that significant symbols are not born of superstition but of human experience and that while religions that adopted them die, the human heart that conceived them lives eternally. Living, it suffers. Suffering, it grows. Growing, it salutes the symbol of suffering. Here is a poem, the last in the book authentic in every detail. Here is a fully emerged poem, old as life, new as the future:

DO AS I TELL YOU

Mark the earth with a cross
Before you die,
Take a stick and bend down
And make two marks, two
Only on the ground. Ask no one why.
Mark before you die
The earth for a sign. You
Are not a soul, you cannot die
Rightly until you scratch a small mark on
the ground.
Lean, and write, and be done and be gone
And the wind be with you.

"I LIKE THE WAY IT BEGINS"

BASSETT, by Stella Gibbons. (Longmans, Green & Co.)

There is a simplicity which comes from living too much in the world, as well as a simplicity which comes from living out of the world.

Miss Hilda Baker was neither a wise nor a sophisticated woman, although she had earned her living for twenty-one years in the office of a small firm that sold paper patterns in the West End of London, and had bought her clothes at the big stores, and

spent some of her three pounds fifteen shillings a week in visits to famous London theatres.

SUZY, by Herbert Gorman. (Farrar & Rinehart.) \$2.50.

Beth Lane no longer exists. But in 1914 the casual wanderer traversing that tangled skein of thoroughfares that criss-crossed between Islington High Street and Colebrook Row might have stumbled upon it, and, perhaps, paused to regard the Lamb and Woolpack, a small untidy public house that lurched rakishly on one corner. The great grimy octopus that is London breathed unceasingly about the Lamb and Woolpack but it cockily turned a slightly bleary front (because of broken shutters) upon that gigantic organism and seemed to dare it to do its worst. This haven of refreshment was conducted by Mr. Albert Napp in the interests of one of the greater breweries of England, a brewery, in fact, that besides bitter, pale ale, barley wine and stout had already produced one peer and was to incubate others.

THE DARING YOUNG MAN ON THE FLYING TRAPEZE, by William Saroyan. (Random House.) \$2.50.

Horizontally wakeful amid universal widths, practising laughter and mirth satire, the end of all, of Rome and yes of Babylon, clenched teeth, remembrance, much warmth volcanic, the streets of Paris, the plains of Jericho, much gliding as of reptile in abstraction, a gallery of watercolors, the sea and the fish with eyes, symphony, a table in the corner of the Eiffel Tower, jazz at the opera house, alarm clock and the tap-dancing of doom, conversation with a tree, the river Nile, Cadillac coupe to Kansas, the roar of Dostoyevsky, and the dark sun.

THIS MUCH IS MINE, by Nola Henderson. (Harrison Smith & Robert Haas.) \$2.

"Hey! . . . Git yer feet outa my belly! . . . Ain't you got no sense tall?"

Ben kinked his tail tighter, grunted and moved up to her chest.

Jo giggled and took a large bite of bread and jam. Ben peered at her with beady eyes and nudged the bread smack into her face. Jo gave a rough push which sent him on his ear several feet away.

"—see sech a fool!" She rolled over and wiped her face on the grass.

THIS SIDE IDOLATRY, A Novel Based on the Life of Charles Dickens, by C. E. Bechhofer Roberts ("Ephesian"). Bobbs-Merrill Co. \$2.50.

"The inscrutable workings of Nature, gentlemen, have added an arrow to my quiver—a male arrow. Mrs. Dickens, I rejoice to state, is doing as well as can under

the circumstances be expected. One more soul rapt from the skies—assuming that the celestial regions are indeed our habitat in the prenatal state—has taken on mortal flesh, which will, however, soon require supplementing by garments of a more prosaic texture, furnished not by nature but out of my own inadequate resources. In short, I am the father of a son."

John Dickens hung up his hat, wiped his forehead and side-whiskers with a gaudy handkerchief, patted a bunch of charms on the watch-chain across his middle, coughed loudly and seated himself on a high stool at his desk.

It was a raw foggy February morning in 1812, and he was announcing the birth of the hero of this story to his fellow clerks in the Naval Pay Office at Portsmouth.

JUVENILE

MIKI AND MARY. Their Search for Treasure, by Maud and Miska Petersham. (Viking Press) \$2.50.

One day Miki had a long talk with Mary. They were going on a trip in search of adventures and they would find great treasure. He explained that they would probably meet pirates. They might even be shipwrecked.

WRITTEN IN

OR TO GOD

Sir: Sick in bed with flu I heard your article about Redfern Mason, musical critic for the San Francisco Examiner during a period of more than twenty-one years. My wife read me the article and as I remember it, Mr. Mason was discharged because he was active in the Newspaper Guild, a sort of labor union to resist the tyranny of newspaper publishers. He was not baldly and frankly discharged, for the Newspaper Code under the New Deal prohibits that, but he was forced out by being deprived of his usual work and assigned to petty cub reporting jobs and in a manner disgraceful to barbarians. When I heard your article on the subject I said I would like to hear the other side—because such conduct as that stated in Pacific Weekly was worse than inhuman, it was stupid.

Now my wife has read to me Mr. Hearst's address over the radio bringing Russia to trial at the bar of the world on accepted facts, none of which is taken from his own publications. This address confirms me in my opinion that the other side should be heard from in the Redfern Mason case. The moral, the human issue involved in Mr. Hearst's radio address, the soul of the matter is that millions are deprived of individual freedom and are starving in Russia because of a ruthless dictatorship which boasts that its power is based on force and knows no limit; that hundreds have been executed without any real trial because they were suspected of nursing rebellion

against the tyranny of dictatorship; hundreds shot for stealing bread and thousands of farmers murdered because they sought to nourish themselves and their families on the grain they had raised.

Everyone must join Mr. Hearst in his righteous indignation against such a cruel and selfish tyranny based on power and force, whether it be the force of the machine gun or the force which controls a man's opportunity to earn a living. Force never advances any cause. The Reign of Terror created Napoleon and put back republicanism for years, and whether it be in the state or in the newspaper office force and injustice ruin whatever they seek to preserve.

Mr. Hearst knows this. I suggest that Mr. Mason appeal to Mr. Hearst as man to man. I do not know Mr. Hearst, but my friend, Fremont Older, tells me he is one of the kindest and most just of men. From other sources I hear that even now he is providing his architect, Miss Julia Morgan, with a trip de luxe to Europe for rest and study. Those who work for him seem to trust his high integrity and magnanimity. One who so ably objects to tyranny of a dictatorship in Russia certainly will not permit a cruel dictatorship in his own house—a dictatorship founded on force quite as effective as bullets. He who takes a man's livelihood from him and humiliates him as an outcast in his declining years is as ruthless in the use of power and force as any dictator or any red army. I say, let Mr. Mason appeal to Mr. Hearst himself. Mr. Hearst has the welfare of this country at heart. His every personal editorial tells you so. He is a patron of learning and of the arts—witness his vast art collection. He is a patron of the drama—witness the Greek Theatre in Berkeley. Yet here is a sensitive artist, an art critic who has served him faithfully for more than 20 years, who is honored in his profession from coast to coast, who is thrown on the street to starve, who is insulted and humiliated—for what? Only because he sought to protect himself and his associates in a little freedom for art and a little security for bread against a selfish and ruthless financial tyranny based on power and force—subtle, but still force.

Let Mr. Mason appeal to the nobility and magnanimity of William Randolph Hearst and I fancy the newspaper world will learn an instructive lesson in loyalty, decency, gratitude and humanity.

San Francisco. Charles Erskine Scott Wood

SONNET TO A STENOGRAPHER AND HER GRANDMOTHER'S FUNERAL

I'd like to lie with you but fear that we
May not share the beauty of that sinning.
When all our faults back to that old be-
ginning
Are listed in the book of you and me
There'll be no noting of that ecstasy.
Blank the page that might have found me
winning
A place beside you in a wondrous seventh
inning
I'd like to, darling, but it cannot be.

Oh, hang the rhetoric! You lie alone!
I can't afford to risk my job like that.
You planned this little party on your own,
And this time, sister, I must leave you flat
Go in and tell him. I'll be glad to stake you.
You may see the ball game, but I don't take
you.
—W. K. B.

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